

existence. For the proportion of fossil to existing birds is small indeed, about 500 extinct to 12,000 living species, and most of these are from the Miocene or later horizons; they are easily referable to existing families, and often to existing genera, so that they throw little light on the phylogeny of modern birds."

XXV.—*Letters, Extracts, Notices, &c.*

WE have received the following letters addressed to "The Editors" :—

SIRS,—Referring to your remarks ('Ibis,' 1902, p. 674) on the dead birds seen by Mr. R. W. Llewellyn at the Casquets Lighthouse on May 15th, I venture to suggest that they were possibly Common Redstarts (*Ruticilla phoenicurus*), the males of which are brightly coloured on the breast.

In Ireland, at any rate, few if any Robins are migrating in May, whereas the end of April or beginning of May is the usual date for Redstarts to arrive. I agree with you that the birds are very unlikely to have been Red-breasted Flycatchers (*Muscicapa parva*).

Yours &c.,

RICHARD M. BARRINGTON.

Fassaroe, Bray,
Co. Wicklow.

SIRS,—In reference to my remarks on the Albatrosses (see above, p. 81), I wish to add that Dr. Davidson, of ss. 'Morning,' has just brought to the Museum two specimens of a Mollymawk from the Indian Ocean, which I take to be the true *Diomedea culminata*. They are certainly distinct from *Diomedea bulleri* of the Snares, and therefore the latter remains a good species. The difference between *D. bulleri* and *D. culminata* is in the culmicorn, which is more expanded posteriorly in *D. bulleri* than in *D. culminata*. If *D. bulleri* had been put into the genus *Thalassogeron*, and

the difference between it and *D. culminata* pointed out, there would have been no difficulty in the matter. *D. bulleri* is certainly congeneric with *D. salvini*. Neither of them is such a typical *Thalassogeron* as *D. culminata* or *D. chlororhyncha*, but they cannot be separated generically.

It is *Diomedea bulleri* which breeds on the Snares, not *D. culminata*. *D. chlororhyncha* and *D. culminata* are both found occasionally in our seas, but I do not know that they breed here. Dr. Filhol says that *D. chlororhyncha* breeds at Campbell Island; but he probably did not distinguish the species accurately. I saw none when I was there in January 1901—only *D. melanophrys*, which was extremely abundant, and a few *D. bulleri* or *D. culminata*.

Yours &c.,

F. W. HUTTON.

Christchurch, Dec. 1st, 1902.

SIRS,—In discussing the respective claims to priority of the names *Chlorochrysa hedwigæ* Berl. & Stolz. and *Chlorochrysa fulgentissima* Chapm., Graf v. Berlepsch raises an important point in regard to what constitutes effective publication, which, so far as the medium in question is concerned, can, I think, be satisfactorily answered. This, the 'Bulletin' of the American Museum of Natural History, is not, as Graf v. Berlepsch terms it, a "periodical," but each annual volume is composed of a series of papers published at irregular intervals.

As stated in the 'Bulletin,' 350 separate copies of each paper are printed, "of which 100 are for the authors and 250 copies for the Library exchange list and for sale." These copies may be purchased from the Museum, or through its official agents in New York, London, Paris, and Berlin. Subscribers to the 'Bulletin,' or those who receive it in exchange, may have the papers it contains sent to them as issued, or as a bound volume at the end of the year, as they elect.

In addition to the copies of each paper distributed and placed on sale by the Museum, the author distributes a

number of complimentary copies ; but I wholly agree with Graf v. Berlepsch that such distribution would not of itself constitute a valid publication. Since, however, the ' Bulletin ' and ' Memoirs ' of the Museum can be purchased when they appear through recognised and stated channels of trade, as well as from the Museum itself, it is evident that in their issuance all the requirements of commercial publication are complied with.

Yours &c.,

FRANK M. CHAPMAN.

American Museum of Natural History,
New York City, Feb. 25, 1903.

SIRS,—With no desire to enter the three-cornered duel in which Messrs. Allen, Grant, and Nelson have so pleasantly, entertainingly, and instructively engaged, Mr. Grant's side-shot at the writer in your issue for January 1903 (p. 109) provokes, if, indeed, it does not compel, a reply.

In brief, I am charged with having described a *subspecies* of Ptarmigan (*Lagopus leucurus peninsularis*) from "only one female specimen in autumn plumage"! Surely no tribunal of systematic ornithologists would deny that this is a *casus belli*! One might almost as well be accused of giving an opinion on a geographical race of which he had never seen a specimen!

However, if Mr. Grant will do me the favour to turn to the reference which he quotes from the American Museum ' Bulletin ' (vol. xvi. p. 236), he will find the following words appended to the description of the Ptarmigan in question: "Of this new form the collection contains the following 26 specimens, all from the Kenai Mts."

Trusting that the difference between one and twenty-six is sufficient to warrant this correction,

I am yours &c.,

FRANK M. CHAPMAN.

American Museum of Natural History,
New York City, Feb. 25, 1903.

The Australasian Ornithologists' Union.—From the 'Emu' of January we learn that the annual meeting of the "Australasian Ornithologists' Union," held at Melbourne in November last, was in every way successful. The President, Col. Legge, was unfortunately not able to be present, but sent an excellent address, which contains much information and good advice. In his absence one of the Vice-Presidents, Mr. A. H. C. Zietz, took the chair. Besides the Council's report, several "lectorettes" were read, illustrated by a "splendid series of photographs." The second day of the meeting was devoted mainly to the Zoological Gardens, and the third to the examination of the National Museum. After the meeting was over, a week's "camp-out excursion" of the members and their friends to the "Mutton-bird Rookeries" on Philip Island took place, and passed off most satisfactorily.

Report of the Society for the Protection of Birds.—The Annual Meeting of the Society for the Protection of Birds, the aims and objects of which we all approve, though we may doubt the advisability of some of the methods by which it is proposed to carry them out, was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel on Feb. 10th, and seems to have passed off most successfully. The Report of the Council rightly specified two of the measures that the Society had recently taken up, in order to carry out their views, as being of noteworthy importance—namely, the passing by Parliament of a new Act whereby birds illegally obtained might be declared to be forfeited, and the promulgation in India of an ordinance which prohibits the exportation of the skins and feathers of all birds except Ostriches and specimens required for scientific purposes. With the efforts of the Society to stop women from using entire birds or their feathers as "ornaments" for their hats, we have every sympathy, and with four duchesses at their head it will be hard if the Council cannot produce some effect on milliners in this matter. At the same time it must be confessed that the progress as yet made in checking this very objectionable fashion is rather slow.

Besides mentioning with approbation the "Audubon Society" in the United States, the Report calls attention to the existence of sister societies with similar objects in South Australia and Central Queensland, so that the good work is progressing in our colonies as well as in America.

A nice series of "leaflets" issued by the Society (edited by Mr. Dresser) contains excellent contributions from several leading ornithologists.

Ornithologists at work abroad.—Mr. W. G. DOGGETT wrote from Entebbe (Nov. 5, 1902) that he was then preparing to start for the southern frontier of Uganda to take up his post as naturalist to the Anglo-German Boundary Commission under Major Delmé Radcliffe. The expedition will start from the shores of Lake Victoria at lat. 1° S., and will define the boundary between Uganda and German East Africa as far west as the Semliki River. In the Semliki forest Mr. Doggett hopes to be able to obtain, besides a good series of its birds, fresh specimens of *Okapia johnstoni*, which are much required in Europe.

Mr. OGILVIE-GRANT left England on the 14th of February for Madeira, whence he intends to proceed on an ornithological foray to the Azores. He hopes to pick up any crumbs in the way of birds that may be left after Mr. Godman's researches in 1862, and to make investigations in other departments of natural history.

We learn from the 'Orn. Monatsberichte' that Dr. KÖNIG of Bonn has left on a third ornithological expedition to Egypt, and was at Port Said on January 3rd. On this occasion he proposes to start with his caravan from Wadi Halfa, and to devote his attention to Dongola, returning from Khartoum in May.

Our last letter from Mr. MICHAEL J. NICOLL, naturalist on board Lord Crawford's steam-yacht 'Valhalla,' R.Y.S., was posted at Monte Video on January 14th. Mr. Nicoll had landed at St. Paul's Rocks and Fernando Noronha and had procured specimens at both places. At the latter island he had obtained special leave to shoot from the governor, and

had secured examples of several land-birds. The 'Valhalla' had not been able to go to South Trinidad, as originally planned, and was proceeding south to the Straits of Magellan and the Pacific.

From 'Globus' we learn that the well-known naturalists PAUL and FRITZ SARASIN have undertaken a new expedition for the further exploration of Celebes, and will send their specimens of birds and mammals to the Dresden Museum.

We hear that the Tring Museum has lately received a collection of birds from Hainan, the scene of Whitehead's explorations ('Ibis,' 1900, p. 192). It has been formed by three Japanese collectors, from whose labours Mr. Rothschild expects results of considerable value.

Our enterprising correspondent, Mr. ROBERT HALL, C.M.Z.S., of Melbourn, has left his home for Vladivostock, and will pass the spring in Amoorland, where, in company with two ornithological friends, he will observe and collect the birds of North-eastern Siberia. In the summer he proposes to proceed to London by the new Transasiatic railway to greet his brother ornithologists before returning to Australia.

XXVI.—*Obituary.*

Mr. T. E. BUCKLEY, Mr. A. A. LE SOUËF, and Dr. C. BERG.

ORNITHOLOGY loses a steadfast adherent, and many ornithologists as steadfast a friend, by the death, on the 4th of November, 1902, of Mr. THOMAS EDWARD BUCKLEY. Born on the 3rd of April, 1846, at St. Thomas's, Old Trafford, near Manchester, of which parish his father (who came from Saddleworth, in Lancashire) was rector, he was educated at Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. in 1869. Three years before this he had passed part of the long vacation in Lapland, reaching Quickjoek, whence he brought back a considerable collection of birds, and was so smitten with the charms of Scandinavia that he revisited the country in 1867 and 1868, though he never again